

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DHAHRA 00009 050843Z

21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07

INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 SCA-01 SCS-03 SCCT-01 INRE-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 /032 W
----- 106203

O R 050808Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4547

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DHAHRAN 0009

DEPARTMENT: PASS COPY TO CHIEF, INVESTIGATION DIVISION, NATIONAL
TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, SA

SUBJECT: CRASH OF MEA AIRLINER IN SAUDI ARABIA

REF: JIDDA 0012

1. NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD INVESTIGATORS KAPUSTIN AND VICTORIAN ARRIVED DHAHRAN JANUARY 3. DURING STOPOVER IN JIDDA, TWO MEN WERE ASKED TO STAY EXTRA DAY TO MEET WITH SHEIKH ABDULLAH MAHDI, SAG DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION. MEETING ENTIRELY CORDIAL AND CHARACTERISTIC OF WARM AND FRIENDLY TREATMENT THEY HAVE RECEIVED THUS FAR IN KINGDOM. KAPUSTIN NOTES, HOWEVER, THAT HE AND VICTORIAN "TREADING LIGHTLY".

2. KAPUSTIN SPENT ALL OF JANUARY 4 AT CRASH SITE. HE DESCRIBES LOCATION OF CRASH TO BE NEAR TAPLINE ROAD AND ON 320 DEGREE HEADING FEW MILES FROM QAISUMA. SECURITY AT SITE DE-
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SCRIBED AS VERY TIGHT. LEBANESE AND MEA OFFICIALS

HAVE ARRIVED AND JOINED INVESTIGATION PARTY. CONGENOFF MET BOEING REP PIPER, WHO ARRIVED FROM LONDON VERY LATE EVENING JANUARY 4. LATER, PIPER BRIEFED BY KAPUSTIN AT LATTER'S HOTEL.

3. UNDERSTAND WRECKAGE SCATTERED OVER 3 TO 6 MILE AREA. KAPUSTIN STATES THAT NATURE OF AIRCRAFT BREAKUP AND TERRAIN SITUATION SUGGESTS IT WILL REQUIRE LENGTHY PERIOD OF TIME TO DETERMINE REASON FOR BREAKUP. HE ADDED "PRESUMABLY AT FL 370". HE WAS SHOWN CONTENTS OF REFTEL AND HAD NOTHING MORE TO ADD. KAPUSTIN, VICTORIAN, AND PIPER LEFT MORNING JANUARY 5 FOR CRASH SITE AND WILL BASE THEIR INVESTIGATION OPERATIONS FOR A LEAST NEXT TWO DAYS OUT OF ARABIAN AMERICAN OIL COMPANY TAPLINE CAMP AT QAISUMA. CONGEN HAS MADE ITS COMMUNICATION FACILITIES AVAILABLE KAPUSTIN TO USE AS REQUIRED.

4. KAPUSTIN ALSO REPORTS MEA HAS INSTITUTED BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION ON ALL PASSENGERS ABOARD ILL-FATED FLIGHT. SAG HAS RELEASED BODIES OF CREW AND FEW OF PASSENGERS FOR AIR LIFTING OUT OF DHAHRAN. KAPUSTIN, WHO EXAMINED MOST OF PASSPORTS OF PASSENGERS ON AIRCRAFT, SATISFIED NO AMERICANS WERE ON BOARD. BUSHNELL

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